

Application Number 10/730,873
Supplemental Amendment dated February 15, 2007

REMARKS

This Supplemental Amendment is being filed after an Amendment that was responsive to the Office Action dated September 13, 2006, but prior to a subsequent Office Action. Applicant has amended claims 1, 8 and 47, and canceled claim 7. Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 10-34, 36-45, 47, 49, 51, 53-56, and 60-66 are pending.

Initially, Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for discussing the present application with Applicant's representative (below-signed) by telephone on February 13, 2007 and February 14, 2007.

During those conversations, the Examiner indicated that independent claims 32 and 56, and all claims depending therefrom, were allowable in their present form. The Examiner also indicated that independent claims 1 and 47 would be rejected in the next Office Action based on one or more of Singer et al. (US 5,638,832), Probst et al. (US 7,103,415), and Muto (US 4,094,321), but would be allowable if amended to include the subject matter of any one of claims 7, 11, 15 or 30.

Applicant does not acquiesce in the Examiner's assertion that claims 1 and 47 as previously presented were unpatentable over the prior art of record. Nonetheless, the interest of expediting allowance of the Application, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 47 according to the Examiner's suggestions. In particular, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to include the subject matter of claim 7, and independent claim 47 to include the subject matter of claim 15.

During the February 14th conversation, Applicant's representative and the Examiner specifically discussed amendments to independent claims 1 and 47 to respectively recite the subject matter of claims 7 and 15. The Examiner indicated that, when so amended, independent claims 1 and 47 would be allowable. Therefore Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims, including independent claims 1 and 47 and the claims depending therefrom, are now in condition for immediate allowance. Applicant reserves the right to re-present the claims as previously presented in one or more subsequent applications claiming priority from the present application.

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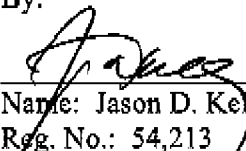
CONCLUSION

All claims in this application are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt allowance of all pending claims. Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to deposit account number 50-1778. The Examiner is invited to telephone the below-signed attorney to discuss this application.

Date:

February 15, 2007
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